

LXI.

BATTLE OF THE ALMA.—MC CARTHY.

[The peace of Victoria's reign was not seriously interrupted until the outbreak of the Crimean war, in 1854. The natural desire of Russia to extend her power to the Dardanelles, and to open a way for her commerce into the Mediterranean by encroaching upon the Turkish dominions, both in Europe and Asia, aroused the jealousy of the Western Powers, and led England and France to combine against her. The war was carried on principally around Sebastopol, a powerful fortress in the peninsula of the Crimea, in southern Russia, and the battle of the Alma was the first of a series of battles which were fought for the possession of that fortress.]

THE invasion of the Crimea, however, was not a soldier's project. It was not welcomed by the English or the French commander. It was undertaken by Lord Raglan out of deference to the recommendations of the government; and by Marshal St. Arnaud out of deference to the emperor of the French, and because Lord Raglan did not see his way to decline the responsibility of it. The allied forces were therefore conveyed to the south-western shore of the Crimea, and effected a landing in Kalamita Bay, a short distance north of the point at which the river Alma runs into the sea. Sebastopol itself lies about thirty miles to the south; and then more southward still, divided by the bulk of a jutting promontory from Sebastopol, is the harbor of Balaklava. The disembarkation began on the morning of September 14, 1854; it was completed on the fifth day; and there were then some 27,000 English, 30,000 French, and 7,000 Turks, landed on the shores of Catherine the Great's Crimea. The landing was effected without any opposition from the Russians. On September 19 the allies marched out of their encampments, and moved southward in the direction of Sebastopol. They had a skirmish or two with a reconnoitering force of Russian cavalry and Cossacks; but they had no business of genuine war until they reached the nearer bank of the Alma. The Russians, in great

strength, had taken up a splendid position on the heights that fringed the other side of the river. The allied forces reached the Alma about noon on September 20. They found that they had to cross the river in the face of the Russian batteries, armed with heavy guns on the highest point of the hills or bluffs, of scattered artillery, and of dense masses of infantry which covered the hills. The Russians were under the command of Prince Mentschikoff. It is certain that Prince Mentschikoff believed his position unassailable, and was convinced that his enemies were delivered into his hands when he saw the allies approach, and attempt to effect the crossing of the river. He had allowed them, of deliberate purpose, to approach thus far. He might have attacked them on their landing, or on their two days' march toward the river. But he did not choose to do any thing of the kind. He had carefully sought out a strong, and what he considered an impregnable, position. He had found it, as he believed, on the south bank of the Alma; and there he was simply biding his time. His idea was that he could hold his ground for some days against the allies with ease; that he would keep them there, play with them, until the great re-enforcements he was expecting could come to him; and then he would suddenly take the offensive and crush the enemy. He proposed to make of the Alma and its banks the grave of the invaders. But, with characteristic arrogance and lack of care, he had neglected some of the very precautions which were essentially necessary to secure any position, however strong. He had not taken the pains to make himself certain that every easy access to his position was closed against the attack of the enemy. The attack was made with desperate courage on the part of the allies, but without any great skill of leadership or tenacity of discipline. It was rather a pell-mell sort of fight in which the headlong courage and the indomitable obstinacy of the English and French troops carried all before them at last.

A study of the battle is of little profit to the ordinary

reader. It was an heroic scramble. There was little coherence of action between the allied forces. But there was, happily, an almost total absence of generalship on the part of the Russians. The soldiers of the Czar fought stoutly and stubbornly, as they always have done; but they could not stand up against the blended vehemence and obstinacy of the English and French. The river was crossed, the opposite heights were mounted, Prince Mentschikoff's great redoubt was carried, the Russians were driven from the field, the allies occupied their ground; the victory was to the Western powers. Indeed, it would not be unfair to say that the victory was to the English; owing to whatever cause, the French did not take that share in the heat of the battle which their strength and their military genius might have led men to expect. St. Arnaud, their commander-in-chief, was in wretched health, on the point of death, in fact; he was in no condition to guide the battle; a brilliant enterprise of General Bosquet was ill-supported, and had nearly proved a failure; and Prince Napoleon's division got hopelessly jammed up and confused. Perhaps it would be fairer to say that, in the confusion and scramble of the whole affair, we were more lucky than the French. If a number of men are rushing headlong, and in the dark, toward some distant point, one may run against an unthought-of obstacle, and fall down, and so lose his chance, while his comrade happens to meet with no such stumbling-block, and goes right on. Perhaps this illustration may not unfairly distribute the parts taken in the battle. It would be superfluous to say that the French fought splendidly where they had any real chance of fighting. But the luck of the day was not with them. On all sides the battle was fought without generalship. On all sides the bravery of the officers and men was worthy of any general. Our men were the luckiest. They saw the heights; they saw the enemy there; they made for him; they got at him; they would not go back; and so he had to give way. That

was the history of the day. The big scramble was all over in a few hours. The first field was fought, and we had won.

The Russians ought to have been pursued. They themselves fully expected a pursuit. They retreated in something like utter confusion, eager to put the Katcha river, which runs south of the Alma, and with a somewhat similar course, between them and the imaginary pursuers. Had they been followed to the Katcha they might have been all made prisoners or destroyed. But there was no pursuit. Lord Raglan was eager to follow up the victory; but the French had as yet hardly any cavalry, and Marshal St. Arnaud would not agree to any further enterprise that day. Lord Raglan believed that he ought not to persist; and nothing was done. The Russians were unable at first to believe in their good fortune. It seemed to them for a long time impossible that any commanders in the world could have failed, under conditions so tempting, to follow a flying and disordered enemy.

Except for the bravery of those who fought, the battle was not much to boast of. The allies altogether considerably outnumbered the Russians, although, from the causes we have mentioned, the Englishmen were left throughout the greater part of the day to encounter an enemy numerically superior, posted on difficult and commanding heights. But it was the first great battle which for nearly forty years our soldiers had fought with a civilized enemy. The military authorities and the country were well disposed to make the most of it. At this distance of time it is almost touching to read some of the heroic contemporaneous descriptions of the great scramble of the Alma. It might almost seem as if, in the imaginings of the enthusiastic historians, Englishmen had never mounted heights and defeated superior numbers before. The sublime triumphs against every adverse condition which had been won by a Marlborough or a Wellington could not have been celebrated in language of more exalted dithyrambic pomp.

The gallant medley on the banks of the Alma, and the fruitless interval of inaction that followed it, were told of as if men were speaking of some battle of the gods.

 LXII.

THE STORY OF CAWNPORE.—KAVE.

[It was largely the fear that Russia, by getting control of the eastern Mediterranean, might throw herself across the most direct route between England and her great empire in the East, that induced the latter power to enter the Crimean war. But England little dreamed, at the close of the war, that a far greater danger to her power existed in India itself. For many years, and from a variety of causes, a smoldering discontent had existed among the populations of India, and it now (1857) broke out into open mutiny. The siege of Cawnpore by Nana Sahib, whose ambition was to restore the old empire of the Moguls, together with the subsequent surrender and massacre of the little English garrison, was one of the most thrilling incidents in the whole history of the mutiny. After the siege had lasted three weeks, the Nana offered conditions of surrender, one of which was that he would provide boats to convey the garrison down the river Ganges to a place of safety.]

THAT the boats were ready at the river-side had been ascertained by a committee of our own people; and when the dreary procession reached the appointed place of embarkation, the uncouth vessels were seen a little way in the stream, in shallow water, for it was the close of the dry season, and the river was at its lowest. The boats were the ordinary eight-oared budgerows of the country—ungainly structures with thatched roofs, looking at a distance like floating haystacks, and into these our people now began to crowd without order or method, even the women with children in their arms, with but little help from others, wading knee-deep in the water, and scrambling as they best could up the sides of the vessels. It was nine o'clock before the whole were em-

barked, and some—Heaven only knows, for their voices are sealed—may have breathed more freely as they awaited the friendly order to push off and to drop down the stream toward the great goal of ultimate deliverance. But there were those on the river banks—those even in the boats themselves—who had far other thoughts, far other expectations. Every boat that had been prepared for our people was intended to be a human slaughter-house. They had not gone down to the banks of a friendly river that was to float them to a place of safety. They had been lured to the appointed shambles, there to be given up to cruel death.

No sooner were our people on board the boats than the foul design became apparent. The sound of a bugle was heard. The native boatmen clambered over the sides of the vessels, and sought the shore. Then a murderous fire of grape-shot and musket-balls was opened upon the wretched passengers from both banks of the river; and presently the thatch of the budgerows, cunningly ignited by hot cinders, burst into a blaze. There was then only a choice of cruel deaths for our dear Christian people. The men, or the foremost among them, strenuous in action to the last, leaped overboard, and strove, with shoulders to the hulls of the boats, to push them into mid-channel. But the bulk of the fleet remained immovable, and the conflagration was spreading. The sick and wounded were burnt to death, or more mercifully suffocated by the smoke; while the stronger women, with children in their arms, took to the river, to be shot down in the water, to be sabered in the stream by the mounted troopers, who rode in after them, to be bayoneted on reaching land, or to be made captives, and reserved for a later and more cruel immolation. The fewest words are here the best. I should have little taste to tell the foul details of this foul slaughter, even if authentic particulars were before me. It is better that they should remain in the obscurity of an uncertain whole; enough that no aspect of Christian humanity, not

the sight of the old general, who had nearly numbered his fourscore years, nor of the little babe still on its mother's breast, raised any feeling of compunction or of pity in these butchers on the river side. It sufficed that there was Christian blood to be shed.

While this terrible scene was being acted at the Ghaut, the Nana Sahib, having full faith in the malevolent activity of his lieutenants on the river bank, was awaiting the issue in his tent on the cantonment plain. It is related of him that, unquiet in mind, he moved about, passing hither and thither, in spite of the indolence of his habits and the obesity of his frame. After a while, tidings of the progress of the massacre were brought to him by a wounded trooper. What had been passing within him during those morning hours no human pen can reveal. Perhaps some slight spasm of remorse may have come upon him, or he may have thought that better use might be made of some of our people alive than dead. But whether moved by pity or by craft, he sent orders back by the messenger that no more women and children should be slain, but that not an Englishman should be left alive. So the murderers, after butchering, or trying to butcher, the remnant of our fighting men, stayed their hands and ceased from the slaughter; and a number of weaker victims, computed with probable accuracy at a hundred and twenty-five, some sorely wounded, some half-drowned, all dripping with the water of the Ganges and begrimed with its mud, were carried back in custody to Cawnpore, by the way they had come, envying, perhaps, those whose destiny had been already accomplished.

But among the men—survivors of the Cawnpore garrison—were some who battled bravely for their lives, and sold them dearly. Strong swimmers took to the river, but often sunk in the reddened water beneath the fire of their pursuers; while others, making toward the land lower down the stream, stood at bay on bank or islet, and made vain but

gallant use of the cherished revolver in the last grim energies of death. There was nothing strange, perhaps, in the fact that the foremost heroes of the defense were the last even now to yield up their lives to the fury of the enemy. One boat held Moore and Vibart, Whiting and Mowbray-Thomson, Ashe, Delafosse, Bolton, and others, who had been conspicuous in the annals of that heroic defense. By some accident or oversight the thatch had escaped ignition. Lighter, too, than the rest, or perhaps more vigorously propelled by the shoulders of these strong men, it drifted down the stream; but Moore was shot through the heart in the act of propulsion, and Ashe and Bolton perished while engaged in the same work. The grape and round-shot from the Oude bank of the river ere long began to complete the massacre. The dying and the dead lay thickly together entangled in the bottom of the boat, and for the living there was not a mouthful of food.

As the day waned it was clear that the activity of the enemy had not abated. That one drifting boat, on the dark waters of the Ganges, without boatman, without oars, without a rudder, was not to be left alone with such sorry chance of escape; so a blazing budgerow was sent down the river after it, and burning arrows were discharged at its roof. Still, however, the boat was true to its occupants; and with the new day, now grounding on sand-banks, now pushed off again into the stream, it made weary progress between the two hostile banks, every hour lighter, for every hour brought more messengers of death. At sunset a pursuing boat from Cawnpore, with fifty or sixty armed natives on board, came after our people, with orders to board and destroy them. But the pursuers also grounded on a sand-bank; and then there was one of those last grand spasms of courage even in death which are seldom absent from the story of English heroism. Exhausted, famishing, sick and wounded, as they were, they would not wait to be attacked. A little party of

officers and soldiers armed themselves to the teeth, and fell heavily upon the people who had come down to destroy them. Very few of the pursuers returned to tell the story of their pursuit. This was the last victory of the hero-martyrs of Cawnpore. They took the enemy's boat, and found in it good stores of ammunition. They would rather have found a little food. Victors as they were, they returned to the cover of the boat only to wrestle with a more formidable enemy. For starvation was staring them in the face.

Sleep fell upon the survivors; and when they woke the wind had risen, and the boat was drifting down the stream—in the darkness they knew not whither; and some even then had waking dreams of a coming deliverance. But with the first glimmer of the morning despair came upon them. The boat had been carried out of the main channel of the river into a creek or siding, where the enemy soon discerned it, and poured a shower of musket balls upon its miserable inmates. Then Vibart, who lay helpless, with both arms shot through, issued his last orders. It was a forlorn hope. But while there was a sound arm among them, that could load and fire, or thrust with a bayonet, still the great game of the English was to go to the front and smite the enemy, as a race that seldom waited to be smitten. So Mowbray-Thomson and Delafosse, with a little band of European soldiers of the Thirty-second and the Eighty-fourth, landed to attack their assailants. The fierce energy of desperation drove them forward. Sepoys and villagers, armed and unarmed, surged around them, but they charged through the astonished multitude, and made their way back again through the crowd of blacks to the point from which they had started. Then they saw that the boat was gone. The fourteen were left upon the pitiless land, while their doomed companions floated down the pitiless water.

There was one more stand to be made by Mowbray-Thomson and his comrades. As they returned along the bank of

the river, seeing after a while no chance of overtaking the boat, they made for a Hindu temple, which had caught the eye of their leader, and defended the door-way with fixed bayonets. After a little time they stood behind a rampart of black and bloody corpses, and fired, with comparative security, over this bulwark of human flesh. A little putrid water found in the temple gave our people new strength, and they held the door-way so gallantly, and so destructively to the enemy, that there seemed to be no hope of expelling them by force of arms. So while word went back to Nana Sahib, that the remnant of the English army was not to be conquered, the assailants, huddling round the temple, brought leaves and fagots, which they piled up beneath the walls, and strove to burn out the little garrison. Then Providence came to their help in their sorest need. The wind blew smoke and fire away from the temple. But the malice of the enemy had a new device in store. They threw bags of powder on the burning embers. There was now nothing left for our people but flight. Precipitating themselves into the midst of the raging multitude, they fired a volley and then charged with the bayonet. Seven of the fourteen carried their lives with them, and little else, to the bank of the river. There they took to the stream; but presently two of the swimmers were shot through the head, while a third, well-nigh exhausted, making for a sand-bank, had his skull battered in as soon as he landed. But the surviving four, being strong swimmers, and with heroic power in doing and in suffering, struck down the stream, and aided by the current, evaded their pursuers. Mowbray-Thomson and Delafosse, with privates Murphy and Sullivan, reached alive the territory of a friendly Oude rajah, and survived to tell the story of Cawnpore.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF ENGLISH SOVEREIGNS

FROM ECGBERHT TO VICTORIA.

SAXON PERIOD.—802-1066.

802-839.	Ecgerht—first king of all Englishmen in Britain.
839-857.	Æthelwulf, son of Ecgerht.
857-860.	Æthelbald,
860-866.	Æthelberht,
866-871.	Æthelred I.,
871-901.	Ælfred (the Great),
901-924.	Eadward I., the Elder, son of Ælfred.
924-940.	Æthelstan,
940-946.	Eadmund I.,
946-955.	Eadred,
955-959.	Eadwig,
959-975.	Eadgar,
975-978.	Eadward II., the Martyr,
978-1013.	Æthelred II., the Unready,
1013-Feb., 1014.	Swein (Swegen), the first Danish king.
1014-April, 1016.	Æthelred II., the Unready. (Restored.)
April-Nov., 1016.	Eadmund II., Ironsides, son of Æthelred II.
1016-1035.	Cnut, son of Swein.
1035-1040.	Harold I., Harefoot,
1040-1042.	Harthacnut,
1042-1066.	Eadward III., the Confessor, son of Æthelred II., the Unready.
Jan.-Oct., 1066.	Harold II., son of Godwine, brother-in-law of Eadward III.

NORMAN PERIOD.—1066-1154.

1066-1087.	William the Conqueror, duke of Normandy.
1087-1100.	William II., Rufus, second son of the Conqueror.
1100-1135.	Henry I., Beauclerc, youngest son of the Conqueror.
1135-1154.	Stephen, count of Blois, son of Adela, fourth daughter of the Conqueror. Matilda, daughter of Henry I., disputes with him the crown.

PLANTAGENETS.

1154-1189.	Henry II., son of Matilda, daughter of Henry I., and Geoffrey, count of Anjou.
1189-1199.	Richard I., Cœur de Lion, son of Henry II.
1199-1216.	John, youngest son of Henry II.
1216-1272.	Henry III., son of John.
1272-1307.	Edward I., son of Henry III.
1307-1327.	Edward II., son of Edward I. (Deposed.)
1327-1377.	Edward III., son of Edward II.
1377-1399.	Richard II., son of Edward the Black Prince, grandson of Edward III. (Deposed.)

PLANTAGENETS.—HOUSE OF LANCASTER ("RED ROSE").—1399-1461.

1399-1413.	Henry IV., son of John, duke of Lancaster, who was the third son of Edward III.
1413-1422.	Henry V., son of Henry IV.
1422-1461.	Henry VI., son of Henry V. (Deposed.)

PLANTAGENETS.—HOUSE OF YORK ("WHITE ROSE").—1461-1485.

1461-1483.	Edward IV., great-grandson of Edmund, duke of York, fourth son of Edward III.; and also great-great-grandson of Lionel, duke of Clarence, second son of Edward III.
April-June, 1483.	Edward V., son of Edward IV. (Deposed and murdered.)
1483-1485.	Richard III., brother of Edward IV. (Defeated and slain in battle.)

HOUSE OF TUDOR.—1485-1603.

1485-1509.	Henry VII., son of Edmund Tudor, earl of Richmond, and Margaret Beaufort, an illegitimate descendant of John, duke of Lancaster, third son of Edward III.
1509-1547.	Henry VIII., second son of Henry VII.
1547-1553.	Edward VI., son of Henry VIII. and his third queen, Jane Seymour.
1553-1558.	Mary I., daughter of Henry VIII. and his first queen, Catherine of Aragon.
1558-1603.	Elizabeth, daughter of Henry VIII. and his second queen, Anne Boleyn.

HOUSE OF STUART—FIRST PERIOD.—1603-1649.

1603-1625.	James I., great-grandson of Margaret, elder daughter of Henry VII., and James IV. Stuart, king of Scotland.
1625-1649.	Charles I., son of James I. (Deposed and beheaded.)

INTERREGNUM.—1649-1660.

- 1649-1653. Commonwealth. Council of State and Parliament.
 1653-1658. Oliver Cromwell, Protector.
 1658-1659. Richard Cromwell, Protector, son of Oliver.
 1659-1660. Commonwealth restored.

HOUSE OF STUART—SECOND PERIOD.—1660-1688.

- 1660-1685. Charles II., son of Charles I.
 1685-1688. James II., second son of Charles I. ("Abdicated.")

INTERREGNUM.—Dec. 11, 1688—Feb. 13, 1689.

HOUSES OF ORANGE AND STUART.—1689-1702.

- 1689-1702. William III. and Mary II., elected king and queen. William III., prince of Orange-Nassau, was the son of William II., prince of Orange-Nassau, and Mary, daughter of Charles I. He married (1677) his cousin, Mary, daughter of James, duke of York, later James II. He was, then, both nephew and son-in-law of James II. William and Mary had no children.

HOUSE OF STUART—THIRD PERIOD.—1702-1714.

- 1702-1714. Anne, second daughter of James II. Married Prince George of Denmark. None of her numerous children survived her.

HOUSE OF HANOVER.—1714 —.

- 1714-1727. George I., elector of Hanover, great-grandson of James I. Elizabeth, daughter of James I., married Frederick V., elector palatine. Their daughter, Sophia, married Ernest Augustus, first elector of Hanover. George Lewis, elector of Hanover—George I. of England—was the son of this marriage.
 1727-1760. George II., son of George I.
 1760-1820. George III., son of Frederick, prince of Wales, and grandson of George II.
 1820-1830. George IV., son of George III. His only child, a daughter, died before him and left no children.
 1830-1837. William IV., third son of George III. No children.
 1837 —. Victoria, daughter of Edward, duke of Kent, fourth son of George III.

CHAUTAUQUA ATLAS

— OF —

ENGLISH HISTORY

SELECTED FROM "THE NEW HISTORICAL ATLAS AND
 GENERAL HISTORY," BY ROBERT H. LABBERTON,
 I VOL., ROYAL 8°, 200 MAPS, CLOTH, \$2.00.

LIST OF MAPS.

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| I. Celtic Britain about the Birth of Christ. | VIII. Britain in 827 A. D.
London about 800 A. D. |
| II. Roman Britain about 369 A. D. | IX. Britain in 878 A. D.
Scene of the Defeat, Wanderings and Victory of Alfred the Great. |
| III. Britain about 500 A. D.
N.E. Part of Kent about 450 A. D. | X. Britain about 975 A. D.
The Realm of Cnut the Great, 1028-1035 A. D. |
| IV. Britain after 577 A. D.
Theatre of War between Britains and West Saxons about 577 A. D. | XI. Britain in 1064.
Neighborhood of York. |
| V. Britain in 626 A. D.
The Battlefield near the River Idle. | XII. Britain from 1066 to 1070 A. D.
Eastern Part of Coast of Sussex. |
| VI. Britain in 658 A. D.
The New Settlements in Central Britain about 666 A. D. | XIII. England and France in 1180.
XIV. England and France in 1223. |
| VII. Britain in 795 A. D.
S. W. Britain about 800 A. D. | XV. England and France about 1360. |

NOTE: Celtic Names. Latin Names. Old English. Modern Names.

COPYRIGHTED.